

Love as Union vs. Personal Autonomy?

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Abstract

The idea of love as a union between the lovers is one of the most prominent and contested accounts of (romantic) love. Critics argue that abandoning the lovers' independent identities or selves poses a threat to personal autonomy. For, "becoming one", the lovers would no longer be able to make decisions on their own, which, apparently, undermines their autonomy. Therefore, the notion of love as union should not be embraced but rejected.

In my paper I explore this criticism and, on the contrary, argue that love as union, while surely having tremendous impact on the lovers' identities, poses no threat to their autonomy. Taking the criticism seriously, I assume a rather strong but still plausible interpretation of the union metaphor according to which the individual identities are subsumed to a shared *we* identity. Likewise, personal autonomy is understood ambitiously, aiming at the idea of an autonomous self. In this regard I consider two seminal and contrasting conceptions of autonomy: 1) an existentialist account according to which we can choose freely who we want to be, and 2) an "identity first" account according to which the ability to make autonomous decisions depends on a "given" self.

In order to reject the above criticism, I argue that, on the first account, subsuming one's identity to a shared *we* identity nevertheless has to be understood as voluntarily chosen and maintained by each lover with regard to who he or she wants to be. Thus, it continuously presupposes personal autonomy instead of posing a threat to it. On the second account, love as union functions as constituent of one's "given" self, defining it in terms of what one fundamentally cares about. Hence, it belongs to the basic presuppositions of being able to make autonomous decisions in the first place and, analogously, poses no threat to personal autonomy.

Key Words: Love, autonomy, identity, self.

1. Introduction

Since the myth Aristophanes tells us in Plato's *Symposium*,¹ the idea of love as a union between the lovers has been of tremendous influence on our understanding of personal and, especially, romantic love. According to

the myth, we were all once “double-creatures” with four legs, four arms and two heads. Because of our strength and hubris we even posed a threat to the gods themselves, so Zeus split us in two halves, i.e. in our now common appearance. Each of these halves then desperately looked for its other half and yearned for being reunited once again. Love is thus nothing but the desire for unity and, if fulfilled, the union itself.²

The general idea of love as union still plays an important role in current debate. Recently, philosophers like Robert Solomon, Robert Nozick and Mark Fisher defended different versions of it.³ Of course, no one takes the union metaphor literally anymore. As the bodily creatures we are, even as lovers we still stay separated. However, love as union is understood to express the idea that the lovers at least share the same *identity* or *self*. Lovers together form and constitute a *we*. Hence, a plausible notion of the union view does not contain an *ontological* thesis about a new *entity*. It is also not the numerical identity of the lovers that is at stake but their *qualitative identity* on a *psychological* level. Thus, a lover following the union view would answer the question, *who* he is, more or less by referring to the shared *we* identity. Accordingly, weaker versions of the union view propose that the shared *we* identity is still accompanied by the remaining individual identities of the lovers, and that different accounts may be given for the relationship between these identities. In contrast, a strong version of the union view denies the possibility of remaining individual identities. Hence, “united” lovers in this sense could *only* refer to the shared *we* identity when being asked, even individually, *who* they are. Everything that has mattered to only one of them before, now always affects them both. The former individual identities of the lovers are, therefore, completely dissolved into the shared *we* identity.⁴

Against this strong version of the union view critics argue that abandoning the lovers’ independent identities or selves poses a threat to personal autonomy.⁵ For, if an independent identity is needed for personal autonomy, and an independent identity is precisely what has to be given up following the union view, love as union, obviously, cannot be compatible with personal autonomy. Therefore, the notion of love as union should not be embraced but rejected.

In the following, I will explore this criticism against the background of the systematic relation between love, identity and autonomy. For the plausibility of the objection hinges on how this relation is spelled out in detail. Firstly, I will make some further explanatory remarks on the union view (2.) and spell out the criticism in more detail (3.). Afterwards, I will discuss the objection on the basis of two seminal and diametrically opposed accounts on how to understand personal autonomy: an existentialist account according to which we can choose freely who we want to be, on the one hand (4.), and an “identity first” account according to which the ability to make

autonomous decisions depends on a “given” self, on the other hand (5.). While on the existentialist account love as union will prove to be a *result* of an autonomously chosen *we* identity, on the “identity first” account, following primarily Harry G. Frankfurt’s notion of “volitional necessities”,⁶ love as union will function as a *necessary condition* and *constituent* of the lovers’ ability to make autonomous decisions in the first place. Hence, my conclusion (6.) will be that on both accounts the objection proves to be unconvincing and love as union, while surely having tremendous impact on the lovers’ identities, nevertheless poses no threat to their autonomy.

2. Love as union and identity

To begin with, one might be tempted to dismiss the union view out of hand. For it seems to be one of these romantic illusions that should not be taken seriously anyway. Still, for the sake of argument, I would like to put such worries aside and simply assume that even its strong version can be spelled out plausibly so it has to face the objection of endangering the lovers’ autonomy.

A proponent of such a strong version of the union view is Mark Fisher.⁷ He argues that mutual lovers develop a “fused self”.

As a lover [...] I will tend to absorb not only your desires but your concepts, beliefs, attitudes, conceptions, emotions and sentiments. [...] In coming to love you I will undergo a process of coming to see everything through your eyes, as it were.⁸

This development being mutual, the lovers will thus develop “a single fused individual.”⁹ However, due to our being bodily creatures, Fisher cautiously mentions “that personal fusion can never be complete.”¹⁰

Accordingly, the notion of a “fused self” does not necessarily entail an ontological claim regarding the development of a new and distinct entity.¹¹ Rather it has to be understood in terms of redefining the lovers’ individual identities so that they develop a “shared identity”, as Robert Solomon and Robert Nozick put it.¹² The lovers see themselves no longer as independent individuals but as fundamentally belonging together. Even friends or bystanders no longer refer to them as individuals but first and foremost as a couple. For example, whoever tries to answer the question, who Romeo is, will surely describe him in terms of his relationship to Juliet – and vice versa. Both belong together in a way that makes it virtually impossible to define their identities independently. It is always Romeo *and* Juliet, as Solomon remarks.¹³

It is thus the *redefinition* of the lovers’ individual identities that finally produces a shared *we* identity. “That is what shared identity means –

not a loss of individual identity but a redefinition of personal identity in terms of the other person.¹⁴ The strong version of the union view then claims that sharing a *we* identity entails an *exhaustive redefinition* of each of the lovers' individual identities. This is what is meant by saying that the lovers' individual identities are completely *dissolved* into the shared *we* identity. Not surprisingly, the idea of such a complete redefinition of the lovers' identities provokes the objection that it bears the danger of leading to a loss of their personal autonomy.

3. Love as union and personal autonomy: the criticism

Most notably, Alan Soble put forward the objection that, in developing a shared self and giving up their independent individual identities, the lovers are no longer able to make decisions on their own, which, in turn, undermines their autonomy.¹⁵ As a starting point of his argument, Soble uses Fisher's claim that in developing a fused self the lovers, even in trivial everyday matters, no longer know, for example, who first had the idea to "get a pizza and then head for the concert."¹⁶ According to Soble, this means that the lovers lose their individual and independent perspective on the world which, in turn, "cancels cognitive autonomy."¹⁷ For such an independent perspective is needed in order to make decisions *on their own*, i.e. autonomously. Put in other words, a necessary condition of being autonomous is having an independent identity. The strong version of the union view, however, due to its complete redefinition of the lovers' identities in terms of a shared *we* identity, explicitly disallows this condition to be met.¹⁸

The fact that Soble makes use of trivial decisions in everyday life seems to deserve some attention. How plausible is Soble's claim that being hindered in deciding on one's own in such matters represents a serious loss of autonomy? On the contrary, it seems to be a common experience that we are not able (or not allowed) to make decisions solely on our own in a vast variety of situations, i.e. as soon as the interests of others come into play. For example, it was by no means solely up to me to present a paper on this occasion. Put this way, Soble's objection would pertain not only to love as union but to all decisions made within some social involvement. So understood, the objection would be nothing more than a trivial remark and hardly worth noticing.¹⁹

Of course, Soble has a more interesting point in mind. For in our usual social involvement we know very well what we would want and how we would decide *if* it were solely up to us. However, following the union view the lovers lose precisely this knowledge. Each of the lovers no longer knows what he or she would want and how he or she would decide if it were up to him or her independently. Instead, all decisions are made following the shared *we* identity. Even each of their wills constantly operates in a "*we*

mode”, so to speak. Hence, the kind of personal autonomy that is at stake when it comes to the corresponding objection against love as union has to be understood as referring to the *autonomous or authentic constitution and forming of one’s identity and will*. In this regard, Soble’s objection has to be taken quite seriously and put to the test in more detail.

To this end, it should be noted, once again, that Soble puts *personal autonomy* on a level with *independence* and, in turn, explains *independence* in terms of having an *identity of one’s own*. However, how plausible is this equalisation of personal autonomy and independent identity? For, obviously, it is the relationship between these two notions that lies at the heart of the objection against love as union. The crucial question, it seems to me, thus becomes how the shared *we* identity is brought about. What kind of relationship between personal autonomy and the redefinition of the lovers’ individual identities to the point of a shared *we* identity is, therefore, at stake?

In order to discuss this question in some detail, the objection against love as union shall now be tested against two seminal and contrasting individualist accounts of personal autonomy.²⁰

4. Rejecting the criticism 1: love as union and identity as a result of existentialist autonomy

According to an existentialist account of personal autonomy, we possess a capacity for, following Jean-Paul Sartre, radical “self-choice”, i.e. we can choose freely who we want to be. To be sure, choosing one’s identity always happens within the limits of the course of one’s life and its specific circumstances, including socio-relational conditions. Nevertheless, we are constantly able to reflect on these limits and circumstances and take a stance on them, thereby denying them the power of (heteronomously) determining who we are. In this respect, our identity is radically up to us. It is thus the *constant capacity of self-reflection and self-choice* that represents our personal autonomy with regard to the constitution and forming of one’s identity and will. Moreover, this capacity entails the *constant reversibility* of one’s identity if one so chooses.

Assuming that love in general belongs to the essential ingredients of one’s identity, existentialist autonomy comprises a form of “love-choice”. Hence, love generally has to be understood as *actively and voluntarily chosen and maintained* by the lover. It is thus a *result* of existentialist autonomy. Consequently, also love as union, and in particular the shared *we* identity, have to be actively chosen and voluntarily brought about as well as maintained by the lovers.²¹ Hence, the shared *we* identity simply represents who the lovers independently want and choose to be in the first place.

Furthermore, in presupposing that existentialist autonomy comprises the constant possibility of revising one’s identity, the individual commitment to the shared *we* identity has to be understood as being subject to possible

revision as well. Hence, the development as well as the maintenance of a shared *we* identity depend on the lovers' constant active commitment. Admittedly, when assuming the strong version of the union view, a lover no longer has any individual "fallback identity" when withdrawing from the shared *we* identity. However, this is also the case with withdrawing from an individual identity. Hence, the union view poses no special problem. In both cases, one "simply" has to make an all new "self-choice".

In summary, if one follows the existentialist notion of self-choice, i.e. the constant capacity for self-reflection and reversibility of one's identity, the union view solely pertains to the lovers' identities. It does not affect, however, their personal autonomy. On the contrary, the idea of the lovers actively creating a shared *we* identity and staying committed to it constantly presupposes their existentialist autonomy. Hence, love as union necessarily depends on it instead of posing a threat to it. The corresponding objection against the union view thus proves to be unconvincing at this point.

5. Rejecting the criticism 2: love as union as basis for identity and personal autonomy

As mentioned above, the idea of our constant capacity for radical self-choice lies at the heart of the existentialist account of personal autonomy. This idea is, of course, in no way uncontested. It has been argued that a radical self-choice is neither a free nor a real choice. For, in being bound by nothing at all, it could merely produce results at random, which usually are, in turn, not accepted as representing a person's authentic choice. The idea of radical self-choice thus could not be invoked to explain personal autonomy.²²

Instead, recently and most prominently, Harry G. Frankfurt has argued that personal autonomy depends on specific aspects of a person's identity that are not voluntarily chosen.²³ They represent a person's "essential nature", i.e. what a person cares about or who he or she fundamentally is. Moreover, they provide one with the necessary criteria for weighing one's options in the first place. The "essential nature" or identity of a person, in turn, consists in "volitional necessities", i.e. in certain configurations of the person's will that have *authority* and cannot be abandoned at will – hence their necessitating character. For Frankfurt, love is such a volitional necessity that defines our identity and is, accordingly, not a matter of choice.²⁴

Our essential natures as individuals are constituted [...] by what we cannot help caring about. The necessities of love [...] define our volitional boundaries. They mark our volitional limits, and thus they delineate our shapes as persons.²⁵

So understood, Frankfurt's account of love is passive.²⁶ Still, love is by no means some external force or compulsion. On the contrary, love represents one's *authentic* will and, consequently, one's identity. This is why Frankfurt ultimately sees a person's will, if bound by essential volitional necessities, as autonomous.²⁷

Admittedly, Frankfurt does not defend an account of love as union explicitly. Nevertheless, he emphasizes the *volitional identification* of the lover with the beloved and her will. "The interests of his beloved are not actually *other* than his at all."²⁸ Seen systematically, it is but a small step to a fully-fledged union view and to the idea of a shared *we* identity. Following Frankfurt's account, love as union would thus explain the idea of a shared *we* identity in terms of *shared volitional necessities*. The lovers would be bound by their own authentic wills to form and maintain a shared *we* identity which, accordingly, would have to be understood as representing their (shared) "essential nature". Finally, the shared volitional necessities would, likewise, provide them with the necessary criteria for weighing their options in order to be able to make autonomous decisions in the first place.

Therefore, following Frankfurt's account of personal autonomy, (individualistic) love as well as love as union can be understood as fundamental constituents of the lovers' identities. For both referring to authentic and authoritative volitional necessities. The shared *we* identity of the lovers thus represents the *necessary basis* of their personal autonomy and, once again, does not pose a threat to it.

6. Conclusion

If my arguments are to be considered plausible, the criticism to the union view thus loses its edge on both accounts of personal autonomy, on the existentialist as well as on the Frankfurtian. Still, one might finally be tempted to criticise love as union as a *direct* hindrance to the lovers' autonomy, thereby avoiding the detour over their identities. On this view, however, love would have to be understood in analogy to such negative manipulating forces like coercion, hypnosis or compulsion. Accordingly, love could, indeed, neither count as a result of existentialist autonomy nor as authentic basis for Frankfurtian autonomy. The shared *we* identity would merely count as a sign of this hindrance, e.g. as pathological codependency. The downside of putting the objection this way is, of course, that love (as union) could no longer be thought of as a positive component of our lives, which, in my view, renders this version of the objection implausible as well.

However, one might think of giving credit to this final version of the objection with regard to the phenomenon of *infatuation* or *amorousness*. For being enamoured often enough is seen as a kind of *anomaly* with regard to who we are and how we would decide under "normal" circumstances. If, for example, Ortega speaks of love as a "conveyance through enchantment", in

which the lover lives *through* the beloved,²⁹ and if Fisher highlights that the lover comes to see *everything* through the eyes of the beloved,³⁰ such, mostly *involuntary* and *one-sided*, absorptions of the identity of the beloved could easily be interpreted not as love but as a central element of infatuation. So understood, infatuation would, indeed, “*overwrite*” the lover’s identity in a way that could be regarded as endangering her personal autonomy as well. However, understood this way the objection can hardly do justice to the aspect of mutuality, in construing it simply as two one-sided absorptions,³¹ and, moreover, it clearly misses the conception of *love* as union. Once again, it has to be regarded as unsuccessful in this respect.

My conclusion is, therefore, still that while love as union surely has tremendous influence on the lovers’ identities, it nevertheless does not pose a threat to their autonomy, at least none worth mentioning.³²

Notes

¹ Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, 189c-194e.

² Of course, the proper relationship between the *desire* for unity and the *union itself* is highly disputed within the analysis of personal love. For my purposes here, it is, however, only the union itself that is up for debate.

³ See R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1988, pp. 194-199, R. Nozick, 'Love's Bond', in *The Examined Life. Philosophical Meditations*. R. Nozick, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1989, pp. 68-86, esp. pp. 70-74, and M. Fisher, *Personal Love*. Duckworth, London, 1990, pp. 26-35. For a partially critical assessment, see N. Delaney, 'Romantic Love and Loving Commitment: Articulating a Modern Ideal'. *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 33, 1996, pp. 339-356, M. Friedman, 'Romantic Love and Personal Autonomy'. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 22, 1998, pp. 162-181, N. Merino, 'The Problem with "We": Rethinking Joint Identity in Romantic Love'. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, vol. 35, 2004, pp. 123-132, and M. Kühler, 'Liebe als Vereinigung im Anschluss an Adam Smith'. *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, vol. 34, 2009, pp. 197-220.

⁴ Noël Merino provides a concise overview of the three main possibilities of spelling out the idea of love as union: 1) identity replacement, 2) third-entity identity, and 3) identity alteration. Cf. N. Merino, 'The Problem with "We": Rethinking Joint Identity in Romantic Love'.

⁵ See, e.g., A. Soble, 'Union, Autonomy, and Concern', in *Love Analyzed*. R. E. Lamb (ed), Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1997, pp. 65-92, M. Friedman, 'Romantic Love and Personal Autonomy', and B. Helm, 'Love', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2009 Edition). E. N. Zalta (ed), URL=<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2009/entries/love/index.html> [28.09.2009], part 2.

⁶ See particularly H. G. Frankfurt, 'On the Necessity of Ideals', in *Necessity, Volition, and Love*. H. G. Frankfurt, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1999, pp. 108-116, H. G. Frankfurt, 'Autonomy, Necessity, and Love', in *Necessity, Volition, and Love*. H. G. Frankfurt, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1999, pp. 129-141, and H. G. Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2004, ch. 2.

⁷ Cf. M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, pp. 26-35.

⁸ M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, pp. 26f.

⁹ M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, p. 27. Fisher also explicitly admits and accepts that developing a fused self poses a threat to individual autonomy, but goes on to state that the "fused couple retains its own autonomy" (p. 28). For another, and still quite interesting, strong version of the union view that is very much alike Fisher's, see J. Ortega y Gasset, 'Für eine Kultur der Liebe', (orig. 1917), in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 1. J. Ortega y Gasset, Bechtermünz, Stuttgart, 1978, pp. 91-97, esp. pp. 95f., and J. Ortega y Gasset, 'Zur Psychologie des interessanten Mannes', (orig. 1925), in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 2. J. Ortega y Gasset, Bechtermünz, Stuttgart 1978, pp. 210-228, esp. p. 215.

¹⁰ M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, p. 27.

¹¹ However, Robert Nozick could be partially seen as making such a claim. Cf. R. Nozick, 'Love's Bond', pp. 70-73.

¹² "Love is shared identity" (R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, p. 193). "In a *we*, the people share an identity and do not simply each have identities that are enlarged" (R. Nozick, 'Love's Bond', p. 82).

¹³ Cf. R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, pp. 192f.

¹⁴ R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, p. 193. See on this note also R. Nozick, 'Love's Bond', p. 71 and p. 74, who emphasizes that "[p]eople who form a *we* pool not only their well-being but also their autonomy. They limit or curtail their own decision-making power and rights; some decisions can no longer be made alone" (p. 71).

¹⁵ Cf. A. Soble, 'Union, Autonomy, and Concern', pp. 70-77.

¹⁶ A. Soble, 'Union, Autonomy, and Concern', p. 71.

¹⁷ A. Soble, 'Union, Autonomy, and Concern', p. 72.

¹⁸ Cf. A. Soble, 'Union, Autonomy, and Concern', pp. 74f.

¹⁹ For a poignant overview of different degrees of hindering the lovers' autonomy in this way within love as union, see M. Friedman, 'Romantic Love and Personal Autonomy', pp. 169-172.

²⁰ One might be tempted to include *socio-relational* accounts of personal autonomy as well. However, by admitting that personal autonomy, as well as the constitution of one's self, depends on socio-relational conditions in the first place, the objection against love as union seems to lose most of its edge anyway. Indeed, Solomon, when spelling out his account of love as union, argues that way. Cf. R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, pp. 204-208.

²¹ Admittedly, Solomon, Nozick and Fisher are not very specific on this matter. Still, they all at least implicitly seem to have an active role of the lovers in mind when it comes to the question of how the shared *we* identity is brought about and kept alive. Solomon at least mentions Sartre, although he emphasizes, as mentioned before and quite like Sartre, the socio-relational conditions of the constitution of one's self. Cf. R. C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for Our Times*, p. 125 and pp. 199-208. Elsewhere, he argues for an account of love as a virtue, thereby making active aspects more explicit. Cf. R. C. Solomon, 'The Virtue of (Erotic) Love'. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 13, 1988, pp. 12-31, cited following the reprint in *The Philosophy of Erotic Love*. R. C. Solomon and K. M. Higgins (eds), The University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1991, pp. 492-518, here p. 513. Nozick as well as Fisher are relatively vague in this respect, but also mention aspects that have to be interpreted as active. Cf. R. Nozick, 'Love's Bond', pp. 70-74 and pp. 82f., and M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, pp. 22-35. For a primarily as well as explicitly active account of love as union, see M. Kühler 'Liebe als

Vereinigung im Anschluss an Adam Smith’.

²² Cf., for example, C. Taylor, ‘What is Human Agency?’, (orig. 1977), in *Human Agency and Language. Philosophical Papers I*. C. Taylor, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 15-44, cited following the German translation ‘Was ist menschliches Handeln?’, in *Negative Freiheit? Zur Kritik des neuzeitlichen Individualismus*. C. Taylor, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 2. edition, 1995, pp. 9-51, here pp. 28-38, and H. G. Frankfurt, ‘On the Necessity of Ideals’, pp. 109f.

²³ With regard to my topic at hand, see esp. H. G. Frankfurt, ‘On the Necessity of Ideals’, H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Autonomy, Necessity, and Love’, H. G. Frankfurt, ‘On Caring’, in *Necessity, Volition, and Love*. H. G. Frankfurt, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1999, pp. 155-180, and H. G. Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*.

²⁴ Cf. H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Autonomy, Necessity, and Love’, pp. 138f., and H. G. Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*, pp. 42ff.

²⁵ H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Autonomy, Necessity, and Love’, p. 138.

²⁶ Although Frankfurt himself denies this and argues for a disinterested concern for the beloved which he explicitly describes as “active love”. Cf. H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Autonomy, Necessity, and Love’, p. 135. For a detailed discussion of passivity and activity in love, see M. Kühler, ‘Passive vs. aktive Liebe. Zwei Kernideen des Liebesbegriffs’. Manuscript, under review.

²⁷ Cf. H. G. Frankfurt, ‘Autonomy, Necessity, and Love’, pp. 135ff., as well as H. G. Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*, pp. 44ff. and p. 50.

²⁸ H. G. Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love*, p. 61. See also H. G. Frankfurt, ‘On Caring’, pp. 168f.

²⁹ Cf. J. Ortega y Gasset, ‘Zur Psychologie des interessanten Mannes’, pp. 215ff.

³⁰ Cf. M. Fisher, *Personal Love*, pp. 26f.

³¹ For how can one at the same time absorb the identity of the beloved completely, and thereby change one’s own, and still provide one’s own identity for the beloved to absorb likewise? See on this note M. Kühler, ‘Passive vs. aktive Liebe. Zwei Kernideen des Liebesbegriffs’.

³² For another line of argument in order to reconcile personal autonomy and love, if not love as union explicitly, see Keith Lehrer’s account of autonomous love in K. Lehrer, ‘Liebe und Autonomie: Ein Vortrag’. *Conceptus: Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, vol. 27/70, 1994, pp. 3-20, and K. Lehrer, ‘Love and Autonomy’, in *Love Analyzed*. R. E. Lamb (ed), Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1997, pp. 107-121.

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